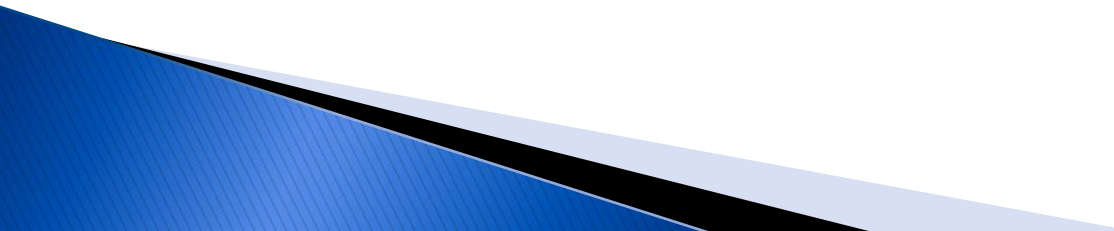


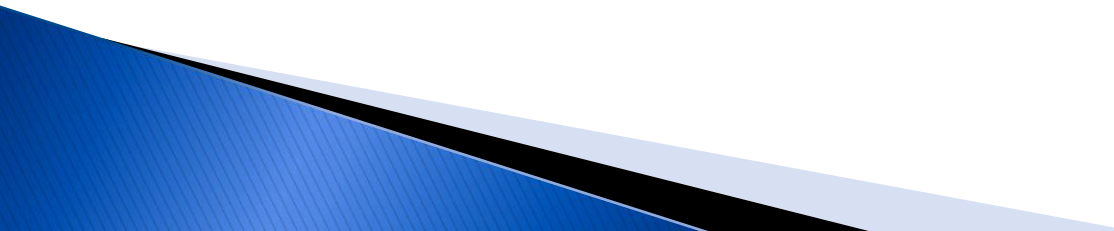
Current Policy In Virginia

Beth O'Connor, M. Ed.
Virginia Rural Health Association

National Issues


- ▶ 2008 National Rural Health Association Policy Institute
January 28-30
 - ▶ 6 delegates from Virginia met with Congressional members and their aides (400 delegates nationally)
 - ▶ Made 3 requests of Congress...
- 

#1:Ensure Medicare and Medicaid Serves Rural

- ▶ Extend key rural Medicare provisions
(expire July 1)
 - ▶ Proportional representation on MedPAC
 - ▶ Protect the physician fee schedule
(subject to 10% cuts)
 - ▶ No increase in costs or reduction in benefits for rural families
- 

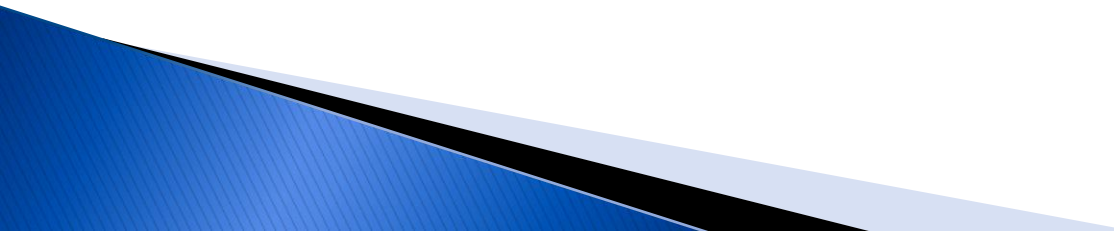
#2: Adequate Funds For the Rural Health Safety Net

Key Virginia programs:

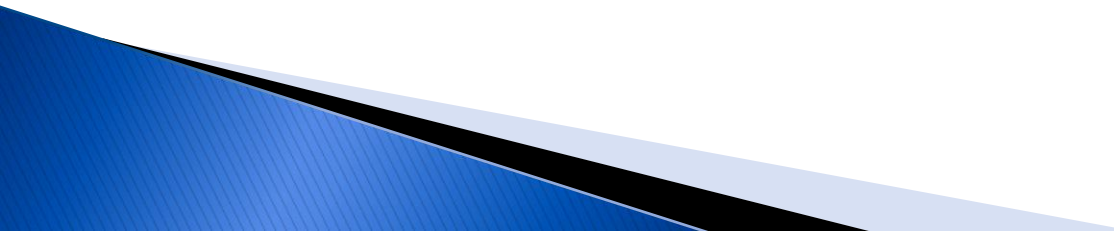
- ▶ Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant
(7 Critical Access Hospitals)
 - ▶ Small Hospital Improvement Program
(24 hospitals)
 - ▶ Rural Health Outreach & Network Grants
(5 grants)
 - ▶ Area Health Education Centers
(training clinicians for rural areas)
- 

#3: Train Future Rural Health Professionals

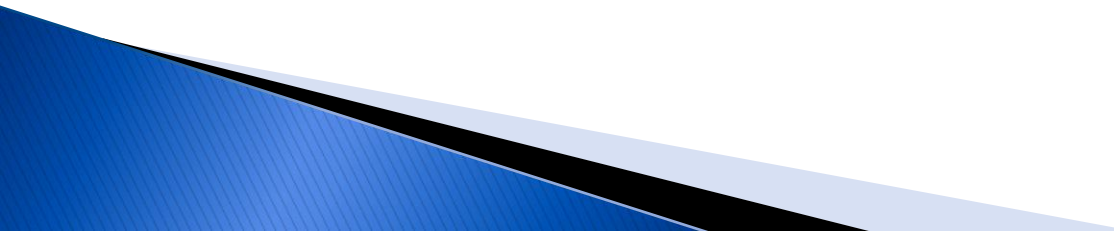
Funding for:

- ▶ National Health Services Corp
 - ▶ Rural Health Outreach and Network Grants
 - ▶ Title VII Health Professions Education Programs
 - ▶ Title VIII Nursing Education Programs
- 

Since the Policy Institute

- ▶ President's Proposed Budget eliminated funding for most safety net programs
 - ▶ House Rural Health Care Coalition and Senate Rural Health Caucus asking for full funding
 - ▶ Congress is unlikely to approve proposed budget
- 

Virginia Issues

- ▶ No rural-specific health legislation proposed
 - ▶ Many with rural implications (Health Access Initiatives)
 - ▶ Budget Conferees issued their budget amendments on March 13
 - ▶ General Assembly will reconvene on April 23rd to consider any vetoes / amendments from the Governor
- 

Health Access Initiatives

- ▶ FAMIS Moms - Increase eligibility from 185% FPL to 200% FPL – to cover 400 more pregnant women each year.

CONFEREES: Increase eligibility to 200%, as of July 2009

- ▶ Support for Safety Net Programs – community health centers, free clinics. \$10 million for the biennium.

CONFEREES: Remove \$4.8 million, leaving \$2.7 for Community Health Centers and \$2.5 for Free Clinics.

Health Access Continued

- ▶ VirginiaShare Pilot - to allow small businesses and their low income, uninsured employees to purchase private health insurance that will cover basic health care. The cost will be shared between the employee, the employer and the state. \$7.7M for 5,000 uninsured workers.

CONFEREES: Eliminate all funding for this initiative

Health Access Continued

- ▶ Screenings for Breast and Cervical Cancer – increased program funding by \$300,000 in FY 2010 to provide screenings and tests to over 1,000 uninsured women ages 18 through 44.

CONFEREES: Governor's Budget stayed intact

- ▶ Missions of Mercy (MOMS) Projects -\$100,000 in the Governor's budget for dental equipment and supplies

CONFEREES: Leave \$50,000



Area Health Education Centers

- ▶ All funding eliminated
- ▶ No funds available for federal match

What next?

Up to you!

Use Rural Health Planning Summit to
help us determine policy needs





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